

In addition to standing committees, Council has appointed a variety of special committees to investigate issues of immediate concern. A few of the 200 special committee holdings in the Archives date from the 1880s. Most, however, are from the 20th century. Special committees deal with matters as far ranging as the establishment of the Consumptive Hospital in 1895 (RG 229), to the status of women in 1974-75 (RG 257).

The records of Council and its committees are useful in understanding the evolution of policy decisions, as well as in gaining insights into the historic character of the City. They are an invaluable source of information on the process of municipal government, everything from why a stop sign was installed in 1982, to the academic question of patronage in political appointments during the 1850s.

The volume of paperwork created by City departments requires an ongoing selection process, to determine which records should be maintained in the Archives. At present, more than 25 departmental record groups are included in the Government Records Collection. These holdings offer a wealth of resource material for researchers. The dynamic changes that have taken place in society and municipal affairs are clearly reflected in the records of such departments as Public Health (RG 11), Planning and Development (RG 33) and Parks and Recreation (RG 12). In selecting the records of departments for retention, the Archives attempts to provide researchers with materials that will enable them to reconstruct the organization, function and daily operating procedures of a department at any point in its history. Many departmental records have an informational value beyond this. They reveal to us the wider experience of the City's development.

Torontonians and the buildings they inhabit are documented by the Property Tax Assessment Rolls. This annual record serves the dual administrative function of forming the basis for calculating municipal taxes and for compiling the municipal voter's list. The rolls contain information relating to each property in the City, including the names of the principal residents and owners of the property, their age, religion, occupation and family size. Lot and building size and, for some years, building materials, can also be determined from the rolls. The Assessment Rolls, which date from 1834, are of great use to students of urban history and geography and to individuals interested in learning more about their ancestors, homes or neighbourhoods.



Assessment rolls, building permits and Council minutes are important tools for researchers who are investigating Toronto's history.

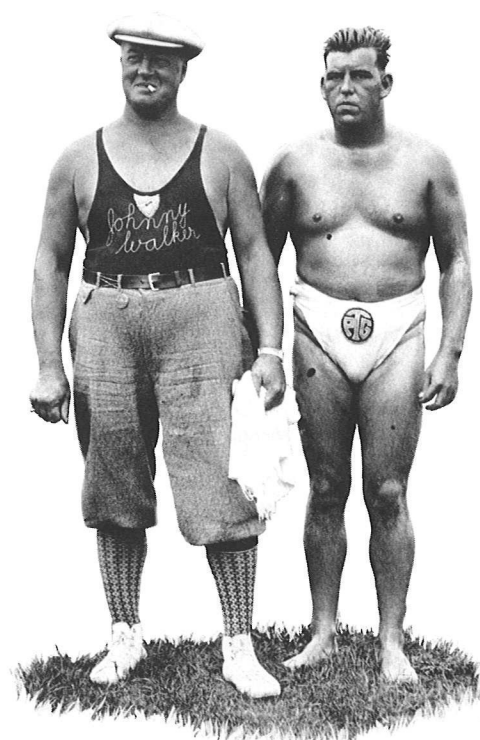
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS

The 500,000 plus images included in the Archives' photographic collections document more than a century of Toronto's history from 1856-1960. Most noteworthy among these photographs are panoramic views from the 1850s, bird's-eye views from the 1890s, photographic albums and lantern slides. The compelling images to be found in these groups of photographs illustrate Toronto's early transformation, development and increasing complexity. They capture social, cultural and economic facets of the City's past as well as the everyday activities of former generations of Torontonians.

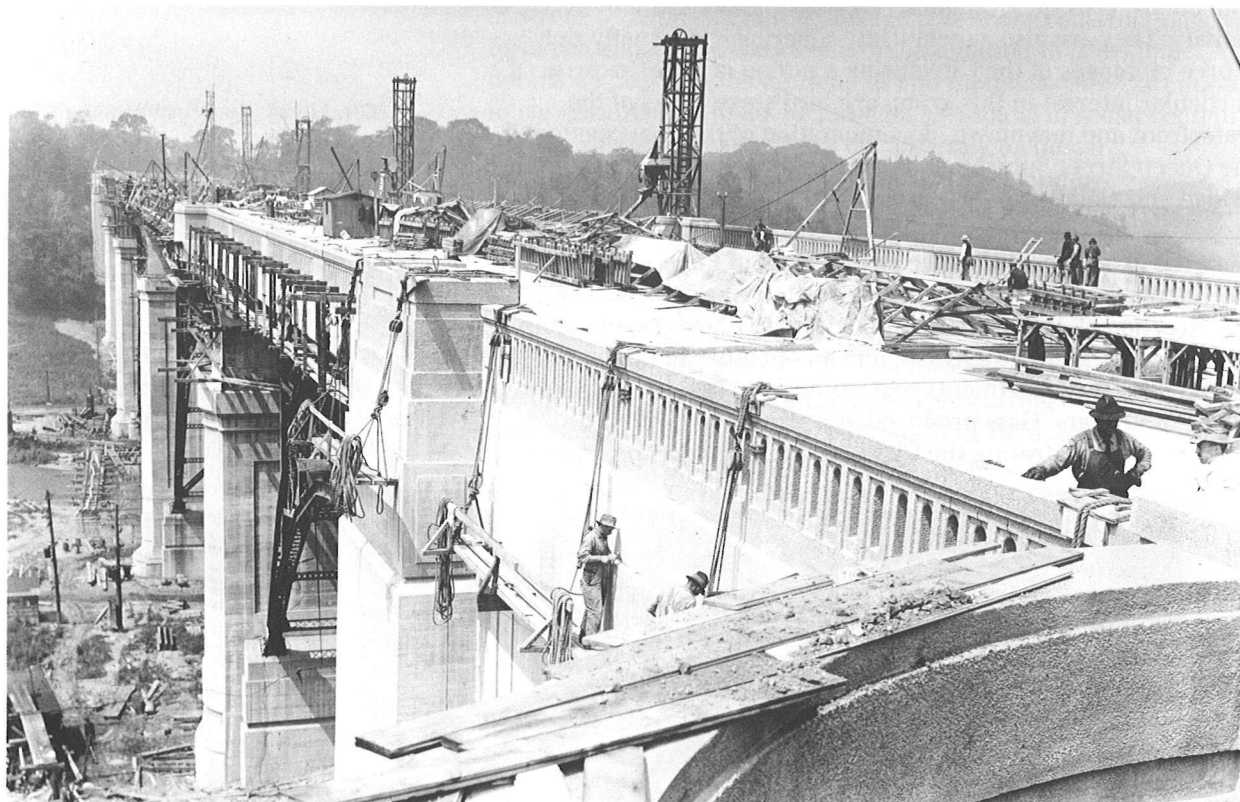
Works of early Toronto photographers, such as the firm of Armstrong, Beere and Hime, Octavius Thompson, Josiah Bruce, and Frank W. Micklethwaite, provide an interesting representation of 19th-century views of the City. Their photographs reveal many aspects of the City and exemplify the range of photographic activity that flourished in Toronto at that time.

The earliest known photographs of Toronto were taken by the firm of Armstrong, Beere and Hime in 1856. Although the originals are kept in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, England, the City of Toronto Archives was presented with a duplicate set of quality prints on the occasion of the City's sesquicentennial. The prints encompass almost a 360 degree panoramic view of the City taken from the now demolished Rossin Hotel, which stood at the south-east corner of King and York streets. These extremely rare photographs provide a unique record of Toronto's early streetscape.

Photographs in the collection from the 1860s, although small in number, are nonetheless significant. This group includes views of the Northern Railway Yards taken by Matthews and Anderson in 1862 and Octavius Thompson's photographic album, *Toronto in the Camera*, published in 1868. Thompson's photographs depict views of principal City buildings, including the Queen's



Canadian National Exhibition, Men's Marathon Swim, Johnny Walker and George Young, September 2, 1931, GM 25134



Construction, Bloor Street Viaduct, July 18, 1917, DPW 10-841

Hotel, the Great Western Railway Station, the Toronto Mechanics' Institute and the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. The architectural perspectives are accompanied by brief, informative descriptions.

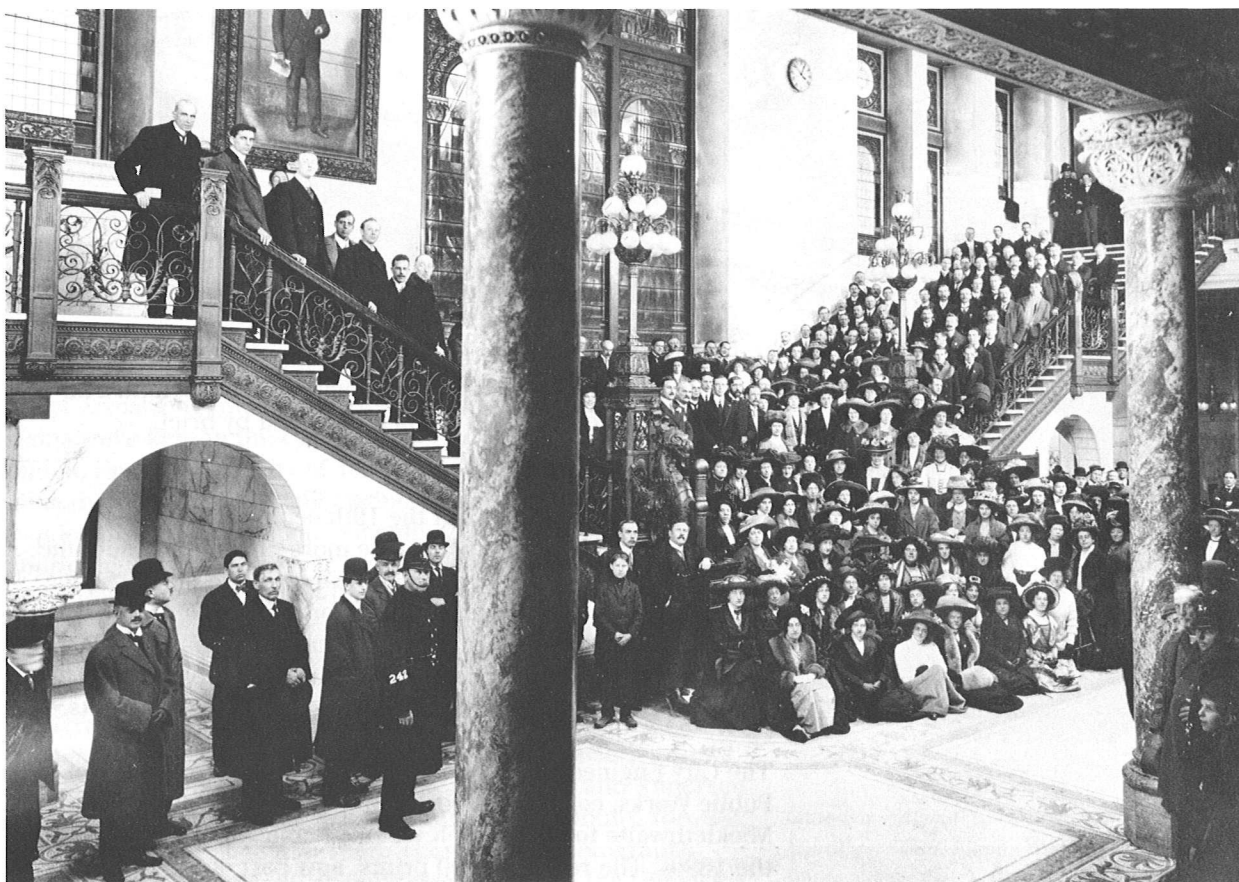
Throughout the latter part of the 19th century, technology improved and photography became more popular. At the same time, public awareness of the significance of the photographic image as a source of documentary information increased. By the 1890s, the City had recognized the value of photography as a means of recording the progress of municipal projects, and began to use photographs to illustrate departmental reports.

The City Engineer's Office, forerunner of the Department of Public Works, commissioned Josiah Bruce and Frank W. Micklethwaite to photograph various Public Works' projects in the 1890s. The resulting 600 prints, now part of the Archives'

collections, provide a valuable record of the department's activity. They are also a technically superior and visually rich source of images of the City during a period of rapid growth. Of particular interest in this group are bird's-eye views of the waterfront and downtown, documentation of the construction of the Queen Street Subway, and panoramic views of York Street Bridge and vicinity.

With the establishment of the Department of Public Works in 1911, a photography and blueprint section was created. Under the direction of Arthur S. Goss, official City photographer from 1911 to 1940, photography became an effective and popular means used by departments to document their activities. Over the next 30 years, Goss produced approximately 30,000 photographs illustrating the City's changing landscape. Images

Musical Festival of the Empire. Civic Reception of the Sheffield Choir, City Hall, Toronto, 1911. Photographer: F.W. Micklethwaite, SC 497-234



*Jewish Anti-Hitler Parade, July 11, 1933,
GM 30544*



of street widenings, grading, bridge and sewer construction form the majority of the collection. In addition to providing details on construction equipment and methods, Goss' attention to composition led to his including a great deal of social content in what might otherwise have been merely technical photographs. Goss' talents were much in demand by departments other than Public Works. This is evidenced by his photographs of slum conditions for the Health Department (1912-1920), City parks and playgrounds (1913-1945) and housing (1936-1947).

News photographs form the bulk of the 20th-century images in the collections. The James Collection, consisting of approximately 6,000 images purchased in 1976, testifies to the skill of pioneer press photographer William James, who immigrated to Toronto from England in 1906. Over the next 40 years, James photographed daily activities as well as important news, social and cultural events. Photographs showing prominent Torontonians, home-front activities during the First

*J. Fleming, Seedsman, Florist, 368 Yonge
Street at Elm Street, 1868. Photographer:
Octavius Thompson, SC 534-1*



World War, street scenes, aerial views and sporting events account for only a portion of the images he sold to the *Toronto Star* and other local newspapers.

In 1984, *The Globe and Mail* donated a large collection of photographic negatives to the Archives. This collection of approximately 140,000 images, spanning the years 1922-1953, reflects the development and expanding role of photojournalism. Significant political and social events included in the collection are demonstrations of the unemployed in the 1930s, construction of landmark buildings, annual Canadian National Exhibitions, the 1939 Royal Visit and home-front activities during the Second World War. This rich visual history of Toronto is only partially available for public viewing. Before it is fully accessible, the considerable number of nitrate-base negatives in the collection must be copied onto safety film and a positive microfiche image produced for easy viewing.

In the 1940s, Toronto experienced a rapid population growth leading to an expansion in public services, including the construction of the Yonge Street Subway. The Strathy Smith Collection, consisting of approximately 2,000 negatives, records the building of Canada's first subway line from the signing of the contract on July 7, 1949, to the official opening on March 30, 1954. The photographs cover all aspects of the project, from the demolition of buildings along the right-of-way, to the construction of tunnels and stations.

The Archives' photographic collection is a public resource of inestimable value. While only major components have been highlighted here, many smaller collections and individual images also add substantially to the visual interpretation of Toronto's history.



May Day Parade, College Street, May 1, 1934,
GM 33197



Children brushing their teeth, High Park Forest
School, August 20, 1917, DPW 11-101

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Archives actively acquires records related to the history of the City and its government from sources other than official City agencies. These non-governmental records, which are usually obtained by either purchase or donation, constitute that group of holdings known as Special Collections. At present, the Archives maintains more than 550 such collections.



*Portrait of Allan Lamport, Mayor of Toronto,
1952-54. Photograph by Majo, SC 303*

The information that can be found in these collections is diverse. Special Collections have been acquired from individuals who have participated in the process of municipal government, such as former mayors, aldermen, and civic employees; organizations that are closely affiliated with the municipal government, like the Bureau of Municipal Research, the Civic Survey Commission, the Guild of Civic Art and the Association of Women Electors; important social service agencies, including the Children's Aid Society of Metropolitan Toronto, the Social Planning Council, Toronto Association of Neighbourhood Services, and the House of Industry; the unions that have represented municipal employees and the Toronto and District Labour Council; community services and resident and ratepayers associations; and a large number of individuals who, either through their work activities or as collectors, have accumulated items of significant bearing on the history of the City.

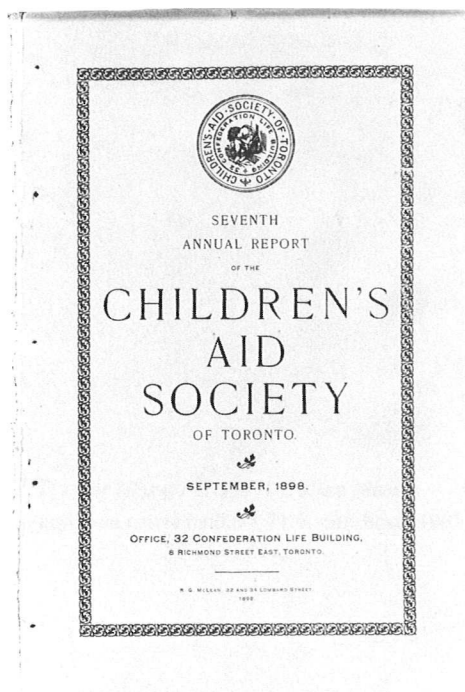
Special Collections groups that most complement Government Records are those obtained from former elected officials. When mayors, aldermen or councillors leave office, they are encouraged to donate their papers related to civic service. At present, the Archives possesses almost 50 such collections, including those of former mayors William Dennison, Nathan Phillips, Allan Lamport, Phillip Givens, David Crombie and John Sewell, as well as a host of prominent aldermen who served in the period from 1950 to the present.



The Lamport Collection (SC 303), for example, contains a large number of subject files as well as scrapbooks, photographs and memorabilia related to this municipal politician, who was active from the late-1930s through the early-1970s. Two of the many topics of interest to be found in this collection are the famous 1948 debate in which Lamport initiated action to allow professional sports to be played on Sunday, and Toronto's 1954 bid to host the 1960 Olympics.

Shelter of the Children's Aid Society (opened at 18 Centre Street in 1892), c. 1895, SC 1

*Seventh Annual Report, Children's Aid Society,
1898, SC 1*



While holdings related to 19th-century politicians are somewhat limited, the Archives has acquired the papers of several Toronto mayors from this period. Recently, the personal papers of Robert Fleming, who served as Mayor in the 1890s, were donated by his granddaughter. The letterbooks and correspondence that form an important part of this collection provide insights into civic issues of the day, including the 1897 Sunday streetcar debate.

Information on the character of civic politics and politicians can also be found in a number of other Special Collections' groups. The Wilson McConnell Collection (SC 200) is the source of biographical information about a large number of prominent civic officials. The material consists primarily of newspaper clippings compiled by McConnell during his tenure as a City Hall journalist. A unique body of information on politicians and municipal elections is available in the Municipal Campaign Literature Collection (SC 20). This collection contains leaflets, brochures, buttons and other material produced by candidates vying for municipal office. If you have ever wondered what a candidate promised before his election, this is the place to look.

The Archives has obtained the records of many of Toronto's important community and social service agencies. While Toronto's municipal government has long been involved in addressing local social welfare problems, it is only since the 1930s that it has provided social services directly. Prior to this, funding was given to a number of private agencies, such as the House of Industry (SC 35), the Toronto Aged Men's and Women's Homes (SC 21), the Working Boy's Home (SC 37) and, of course, the Children's Aid Society (SC 1). The records of these organizations afford researchers an opportunity to examine the evolving structure of the City's social welfare system and the character of those individuals who depended on its largesse.

A related group of Special Collections' holdings are those of community and settlement agencies. These groups have played an important role in supporting people in their communities and were particularly instrumental in facilitating the resettlement of new arrivals to the City from other parts of Canada and overseas. Holdings in this group include the collections of the University Settlement House (SC 24), Central Neighbourhood House (SC 5) and Georgina House (SC 9).



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